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# WHY WIN?

Evangelism is not the activity of some hyperactive Christians. The Great Commission commands every church member to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). The Lord's redeemed should say so (Psalms 107:2). However, Bill Bright in his book *The Coming Revival* states, "Only two percent of believers in America regularly share their faith" (New Life Publications, p. 65). Evangelism, the act of getting the Word out, is begun by laying the foundation of God's holiness, the sin of man, the demands of the Law, and the consequences of sin. First, is the bad news: all have sinned and are eternally doomed. However, there is good news: Jesus Christ provided a way of escape through the new birth. A desire for the lost to be saved should prompt God's people to share their faith. However, the devil steps in and makes us feel inadequate. Saved people want to share their faith but often have a misconception that the Holy Spirit will automatically fill their mouths. When words are not readily available, they may make the excuse that "it's not the Lord's time." Tragically, that "perfect" time may never come. The Bible teaches that God's Word must be kept in our hearts and ready on our lips (Proverbs 22:18). Believers must be equipped. Yet, many people have traditionally lacked a game plan for evangelism, not realizing how much instruction the Bible provides. This booklet will provide fundamental Biblical instruction on witnessing to help equip believers. Much of the material is based on *The School of Biblical Evangelism* by Ray Comfort and Kirk Cameron but has been revised to emphasize the need for an experimental knowledge of salvation. The Bible provides many reasons why a believer should win souls: soul winners are wise (Proverbs 11:30), will shine like stars (Daniel 12:3), and will cover a multitude of sins (James 5:20). Soul winners are obedient believers who love the Lord and keep His commandments (John 5:20).

# GOD'S LAW AND CONVICTION

A person must be convicted of sin before he can be saved. By God's design, His Law serves as an evangelistic tool to inform people of their sin. Acts 28:23 tells us how Paul evangelized, "From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and the prophets." Fulfilled prophecy proves the inspiration of the scriptures and appeals to the intellect, while the Law appeals to the conscience. Prophecy produces faith in God's Word, and the Law produces personal knowledge of sin. Salvation won't make sense without knowledge of sin. Telling people that they are a sinner can be seen as offensive, as it seems like you are falsely accusing them of things they did not even know were wrong. Before sharing the good news, you must share the bad; The bad news makes the good news good. People must be told about the Ten Commandments so they can see that they have personally offended God. When convicted of breaking His Law, the Holy Spirit helps them understand what makes the "good news" so good. However, most people consider themselves to be "good people" and don't see the need for "good news." When explained in its fullness, God's Law prevents people from justifying themselves. "Now we know that whatever the Law says it says to those who are under the Law so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the Law rather, through the Law comes knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:19-20). The Law leaves everyone guilty before God. His Law acts as a schoolmaster to bring sinners to Christ (Galatians 3:24). When people understand sin, a transgression of God's Law, they will become convicted and see their need for mercy and grace.

Through the cross God extended grace, or unmerited favor, toward humanity. A witness must portray God's grace as amazing. Simply quoting John 3:16 no longer carries much weight because lost people don't seem to care. Romans 5:20 has the solution and reads, "Moreover the Law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound." God's Law shows sinners their personal offenses, produces Godly sorrow, and leads them to repentance. Everyone must answer to God. Sinners must realize their personal sins and deal with the personal God behind the Law. Charles Spurgeon said, "They will never accept grace until they tremble before a just and holy Law."

# BELIEVING ISN'T EASY

Statistics suggest that 80 - 90% of people whose profession consists of making a “decision for Christ” fall away. (WOM pg. 61-63) Why? They were never truly saved. Modern evangelism ignores the main issue of sin and humanity’s need for repentance and regeneration. Easy-believism lures sinners with prosperity, happiness, and peace, but completely avoids the “bad news.” A witness should tell sinners that everyone must die and face judgment (Hebrews 9:27). The issue isn’t happiness but righteousness. Without the imputed righteousness of Christ, sinners will experience God’s wrath. Everyone has broken God’s Law, and unless we repent and are born again we are still under God’s wrath. Peace and joy are results of, not reasons for, salvation. Enticing sinners with results gets them to respond with wrong motives instead of with repentance, leading to false professions of salvation and thus explaining the high apostasy rate.

Revelation 3:20 is a good example of a passage false teachers often take out of context. Jesus isn’t knocking on the door of a person’s heart asking to be let in; the Holy Spirit is convicting that person of his sin. This passage was written to the church at Laodicea, not to sinners. Jesus said “repent and believe,” not “let me in.”

False teachers say that all a person has to do to be saved is call on the Lord. Romans 10:13 reads, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” “Shall” is in the future tense in this verse. Simply calling isn’t enough. God must answer. Calling requires dependence and trust in the Lord.

By not stressing Christ’s blood atonement, evangelists are taking God’s love out of context to make “accepting Him” easier. God does love us, but His love should only be mentioned in the context of the cross. A witness should express God’s love as it relates to sin by explaining how God sent His Son to die on the cross for our sins: the ultimate act of love.

Easy-believism teaches that God has a wonderful plan for our lives. While He does have a “plan,” it consists of repentance and regeneration not health, wealth, and prosperity. Jesus used the Ten Commandments to show sinners God’s standard. Once they see His standard, the Holy Spirit will convict them and cause a thirst for Christ’s righteousness. A witness cannot explain God’s love or grace without the cross. He can’t point to the cross without direct reference to sin. He can’t refer to sin without using the Law.

False teachers put more emphasis on “believe” than “repent” because

the word “repent” carries connotations of sin, judgment, and condemnation. Even the devil and his angels believe, but unless a person repents he won’t be born again (James 2:19). Because God is holy, sinners cannot have fellowship with Him unless they repent of their sins, are forgiven, and experience the new birth.

The scriptures repeatedly stress the importance of repentance. In Acts 17:30, God commands everyone to repent. Second Peter 3:9 reads, “The Lord is not willing that any perish but that all should come to repentance.” Also, Jesus sent the disciples out to preach repentance to all nations. The necessity of repentance means we must explain the Law to sinners and relate it to them personally. If they don’t know they have sinned, they can’t repent. Repentance, which means “to turn from sin,” is more than just apologizing. “Repentance” is the translation of two Greek words. “Metamelomai” expresses regret and requires deep conviction and sorrow over sins (2 Corinthians 7:10). The second word, “metanoia”, means a change of the mind or thought. However, it is more than a mere intellectual change of view. It requires a change in the entire spirit and changes all of a sinner’s thinking faculties of what was previously natural. True repentance requires regeneration, which occurs when the Holy Spirit changes and renews the soul in the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). When a sinner is forgiven he is born again, as John 3:8 explains. A sinner is saved through both repentance and faith, resulting in regeneration (a new birth). Dr. Edgar Mullins wrote, “Repentance may be mistaken for mere reformation and faith for blind belief, when taken apart from their place in the organic unity of Christian experience. Repentance is “toward God”. It is an element in a personal transaction that awakens the will and emotions. The whole nature is stirred to depths in this personal return to God in obedience. So faith is a vital union with God through Christ, and not the acceptance merely of propositions about God or Christ” (The Christian Religion In Its Doctrinal Expression, page 55).

# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

## (EXODUS 20:1-17)

1. **NO OTHER GODS:** A sinner cannot put God first or submit to His will. The Law condemns us because we fail to love God who gave us life.

2. **NO GRAVEN IMAGES:** People violate this command by making a god to suit their needs by saying, “A loving God won’t send a sinner to Hell.” God is perfect and just. Everyone has violated His Law, and He will judge with a perfect Law that requires perfection and punishment.

3. **DON’T TAKE THE LORD’S NAME IN VAIN:** Using His name in vain is the easiest way for man to show hatred toward the Creator. It’s not just a word. His name is special and requires respect. When hearing someone take His name in vain, we have an open door to tell a person about God’s holiness, sin, and how to know Him.

4. **KEEP THE SABBATH HOLY:** Ask “On what day do you stop everything you have going on and acknowledge the Creator?”

5. **HONOR YOUR PARENTS:** Honor means esteeming, showing respect, and obeying in all things. Children are naturally sinful and naturally disobey, proving man has a depraved nature. Some may say they have kept this command. To combat this denial, we need to confront people with the sins of the flesh first: if people have stolen or lied they have disobeyed their parents by being a lying thief.

6. **DON’T KILL:** God sees the intent and motive of sin. Because His eyes see evil thoughts, hating is a sin. Hating someone will prevent people from sharing the Gospel. As a result they are guilty of murder because they desire that person’s eternal death by not presenting the words of life. God declares a person guilty for omission, and not witnessing will cause spiritual death. Ezekiel 3:18 says that their blood will be on our hands, but like Paul we can be innocent (Acts 20:26-27).

7. **DON’T COMMIT ADULTERY:** This command might be the most powerful in awakening people to their sins. Lust doesn’t end in itself; in-

stead, it leads to fornication, perversion, adultery, and murder. Lust burns in a person's heart, forces itself through the flesh, and has its own will. Jesus said that even looking with lust breaks this commandment (Matthew 5:28). Sex outside of marriage insults God by ruining His gift to us.

8. **DON'T STEAL:** Sinners try to justify this commandment by claiming that "theft" depends on value, time, or motive. People may have "good" motives, committed the sin a long time ago, or stolen something of little value. But they have still sinned. The only way to deal with stealing, just like any sin, is by repenting. Stealing can't be rationalized, only forgiven.

9. **DON'T BEAR FALSE WITNESS:** There are no differences between fibs, white lies, exaggerations, or blatant lies. One lie makes a person a liar. A man's heart is utterly deceitful, and he is born speaking lies.

10. **DON'T COVET:** While coveting seems relatively innocent, it is a precursor to stealing, lying, and adultery. Coveting reveals a lack of gratitude for what God has given a person and breaks the first two commandments. The other commandments prevent a person from injuring someone else, but this commandment forbids the wrongful desire of self-gratification.

# FOLLOW THE LEADER

Jesus taught us how to evangelize in John 4:7-26. First, He spoke to the woman in private. People will be more willing to open up when alone. Second, He instituted four principles a witness should use today: **relate, create, convict, and reveal.**

## RELATE

Jesus began by using water to relate to the woman in the natural realm. The natural man, as a sinner, won't understand spiritual matters. So, how should we follow this example?

- ❖ Start a conversation by relating to them. Even something as simple as “Hi, how are you?” can begin a conversation.

## CREATE

Next, Jesus created an opportunity to talk about spiritual matters. He simply mentioned the things of God.

- ❖ This is easy and can start with, “How was church on Sunday?”
- ❖ Asking, “Do you have a Christian background?” can probe for their beliefs.

## CONVICT

Jesus then convicted her by using God's Law. He spoke to her conscience through the seventh commandment. The Law caused her to know her sin.

- ❖ Something simple we can use is, “Do you think you have kept the commandments?” Most people will say they have. Follow that with a discussion of the commandments.
  - ☞ “Have you ever stolen or lied?”
- ❖ This must be done in a spirit of love and with meekness, or they will see it as confrontational. God writes His Law in their hearts, and it's the Holy Spirit's job to convict (Romans 2:14-16).

## REVEAL

Finally, Jesus revealed Himself as the Messiah. Once the Law humbles a person, he is ready to hear the good news: there is grace available through Jesus. James 4:6 says, “God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

- ❖ At this point, present the Gospel:
  - ☞ “God sent His Son to die in your place. Jesus rose from the dead and defeated death.”
  - ☞ The message presented needs to remain simple: “You broke God's Law, but Jesus paid the fine. If you repent, God will forgive. You have to be born again. Keep praying until He forgives you.”



# WDJD

Remembering a simple acronym will guide the conversation and give structure to our witnessing:

1. **W**ould you consider yourself a good person?
2. **D**o you think you have kept the Ten Commandments?
3. **J**udgment: Will you be found innocent or guilty?
4. **D**estiny: Would you go to Heaven or Hell?

Let's take a look at an example.

## ***Would you consider yourself a good person?***

- ◇ Them: "Yeah, I'm a pretty good person."

Most people will have this response. Sinful nature expresses itself through pride and self righteousness. Next use the Law.

## ***Do you think you have kept the Ten Commandments?***

Some will say "yes" and some will say "no."

- ◇ You: "Let's take a look at a few and see. Have you ever told a lie?"
- ◇ Them: "One or two."
- ◇ You: "What does that make you?"
- ◇ Them: "A liar."
- ◇ You: "Have you ever stolen anything?"
- ◇ Them: "Maybe when I was little."
- ◇ You: "What does that make you?"
- ◇ Them: "A thief."

*(The Holy Spirit will let you know which commandments to use.)*

## ***If God were to judge you based on the Ten Commandments on Judgment Day, would you be found innocent or guilty?***

- ◇ Them: "I'm a pretty good person though."
- ◇ You: "You just admitted to being a lying thief, which breaks the Commandments. So are you innocent or guilty?"
- ◇ Them: "But it was a long time ago."
- ◇ You: "Try that in a court of Law. A good judge will punish you no matter how much time has passed. Time doesn't forgive sins. Innocent or guilty?"
- ◇ Them: "But I've done more good than bad."
- ◇ You: "If you would listen to your conscience and be honest you know you will be guilty before God. If you say you are innocent you are calling God a liar."

### ***Would you go to Heaven or Hell?***

- ◇ Them: "I'm going to Heaven."
- ◇ You: "Really? Why?"
- ◇ Them: "Because God is forgiving."
- ◇ You: "So you are telling me that God is going to let murderers and rapists into Heaven because He is forgiving?"
- ◇ Them: "You have to ask Him for forgiveness."
- ◇ You: "So If I just say I'm sorry God is going to say come on in? That wouldn't work in court, and it won't work with God. You should be sorry. You broke the Law. Justice must be served."

### ***Be prepared for the following reactions:***

- ◇ "I don't believe in Hell"
  - ◇ You: "It doesn't matter if you believe or not. A person can jump out in the middle of the road and tell a massive truck headed at them that they don't believe in trucks. A lack of belief doesn't change reality. You admitted that you broke God's Law. Unless you repent you're headed for reality. Hell will be full of people who didn't believe in it."
- ◇ "I'm guilty but still going to Heaven."
  - ◇ You: "A good judge in a criminal case with a man found guilty before him won't just let the guilty man go. A good judge would make sure the guilty man was punished. God is a just judge and must punish sin."
- ◇ "I'm guilty and headed for Hell."
  - ◇ You: "Do you know what hell is like? Hell is a lake of fire with gnashing of teeth, eternal death, and everlasting darkness. Does that bother you?"
- ◇ "I don't really care."
  - ◇ You: "You're really not afraid of God? The Bible says it's a terrible thing to fall into the hands of an angry God. If you don't pray for forgiveness, He'll pour out His wrath on you. I'm going to keep praying that God deals with you and when you come to your senses give me a call and we can talk more."

# TESTIMONY

Witnessing to someone you know personally is often harder than witnessing to a complete stranger. Because no one can argue with what you have experienced, telling your testimony can be an effective way to personalize the message without compromising it.

First Peter 3:15-16 says, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect keeping a clear conscience so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.” Learning to articulate your testimony will help you use it effectively. Salvation centers on the cross and so should a testimony. An effective testimony must include the key components of salvation: sin, judgment, and rebirth. Only telling someone that you were sad and Jesus made you happy is not evangelizing. The acronym WDJJ can give a testimony structure:

## ***Would you consider yourself a good person?***

- ◇ “I thought I was good until I examined the Ten Commandments and learned of my sin.”

## ***Do you think you have kept the Ten Commandments?***

- ◇ “I realized I had stolen, lied, and broken His Law.”

## ***If God were to judge you based on the Ten Commandments on Judgment Day, would you be found innocent or guilty?***

- ◇ “I knew that if God judged me on the Day of Judgment He would find me guilty, and that made me truly sorry for my sins.”

## ***Would you go to Heaven or Hell?***

- ◇ “I knew that if I died I would go to Hell.”

## ***Point to the cross***

- ◇ “Then I realized why Jesus was beaten and crucified. He died for my forgiveness.”

## ***Stress Repentance & the Rebirth***

- ◇ “I confessed my sins and put my trust in what Jesus did for me. I repented of my sins and begged God to forgive me. I kept praying until He forgave me. He took away my sin and gave me a new life. I know today that the Bible is true because I know I’m forgiven and going to heaven.”

# THE BASICS

We must pray for the right spirit, tone of voice, and attitude when we witness. There will be times when we will need to be aggressive, but it should never be done with anger or yelling. When we are moved with compassion and alarm, our tone will demonstrate a pleading concern. We will have great liberty to speak boldly when the other person senses we are *genuinely* concerned.

Sinners will often reject the Gospel with the argument that Christians are hypocrites. Hypocrisy will not be an excuse at judgment. The word “hypocrite” comes from the Greek word for pretender. Hypocrisy is the practice of professing beliefs, feelings, or virtues that one does not hold. If there is ever any pretense in what we do, we evidently don’t fear God. A hypocrite may pretend to be saved when he is not, or Christians may appear hypocritical when they act like the world, but there should be no hypocrites in the true church. The Church is the body of Christ comprised only of true believers; hypocrites are pretenders who sit among God’s people. When people say they love someone but don’t share their faith with that person, they are being a hypocrite. Witnessing must be genuine. The world needs us to be true and faithful in our witnessing and speak the truth about sin, righteousness, and judgment.

Testifying about God must balance His compassion with His retribution. God is love, but He’s also the God of wrath. Without presenting God’s wrath, people won’t see a need to repent. Without gaining knowledge of God’s judgment, sinners will not see sin’s fearful consequences. God’s compassion can’t be separated from his retribution because they are related. Because God is just and must punish sin, He sent Christ to reconcile the world to Himself out of His great compassion. There would be no cross without wrath against sin. We could prove there is a Day of Judgment because it is written in the Bible. However, God has also revealed His retribution and compassion in the Gospel and offers forgiveness through the Savior. Through the message of the Gospel, we know Judgment Day will happen. By presenting the spiritual nature of the moral Law, we can help people realize their guilt and their need to take refuge from His coming wrath. Talking about God’s judgment doesn’t mean you are causing unnecessary fear. They have sinned, God’s wrath is on them, and the Holy Spirit will convict them of His judgment. Unbelievers are already condemned (John 3:18)

When we warn them, sinners will ask, “Could you be wrong about Judgment Day and Hell?” Be prepared with an answer. Suppose we are wrong. If there were not a Hell or a Judgment Day, the Bible would be a lie. God would not be just, but indifferent towards sin. Each writer of the Bible would

have bore false witness. Jesus would be a liar and all of His claims would be false. He would have given His life in vain, and there would be no justice. There would not be an afterlife, only death. No Heaven and no Hell; just nothing. However, if Christianity is right, there is eternal justice and sinners will find themselves before the judgment seat of God. Not believing in Hell or Judgment doesn't make either less true. They will both happen. The good news is that though everyone deserves judgment, God offers mercy through the cross. Jesus paid the fine. All we have to do is repent, trust in Him, and experience the new birth.

Faithful witnessing requires warning people of the reality of Hell and providing the Biblical description. Hell is not a metaphor for the grave or eternal sleep. God punishes sin eternally in Hell. Those who go to Hell will be conscious and aware of what is happening. In Luke 16:19-31, the rich man found himself in Hell. He was in a place of torment and felt pain, thirst, and remorse. The fate of the unsaved is described as:

- ◇ Shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2)
- ◇ Everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46)
- ◇ Weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 24:51)
- ◇ Eternal fire and darkness (Jude 7,13).

Sinners should fear hell. But a sinner won't understand his eternal destiny unless he is convicted by the Law. Without understanding sin, he will see God as harsh and unjust. He won't understand that he deserves Hell. Therefore, he won't understand mercy or grace and will lack gratitude for Christ's sacrifice. When he understands sin, he won't just seek salvation to escape Hell; he'll repent and put his trust in the Savior because God loved him so much that he gave his Son so he wouldn't have to go there.

## **MAN'S CONDITION**

False religions misinterpret man's true condition and teach that good works will be sufficient to enter heaven. Faithful witnessing will help people understand "original sin" and the need for the Savior. "Original sin" refers to the sin of Adam and the sinful nature possessed by everyone because of Adam (Romans 5:12). Sinful nature is called depravity and consists of five things characterizing everyone when they are born:

1. Destitute of love to God (Matthew 22:37)
2. Prefers self over God (2 Timothy 3:2-5)
3. Things coming out of his heart defile him (Mark 7:15, 21-23)
4. A continual bias toward evil (Genesis 6:5)
5. Can't turn away from sin by himself (Romans 7:18)

Depravity results in willful rebellion against God and brings evil results. Adam died spiritually the day he sinned. Ezekiel 18:4 says, “The soul that sins it shall die.” We are born dead in sin, cut off, and detached from the life of God. While children are covered by grace until they are convicted, man is born spiritually dead. Jesus came to give spiritual life. Because the carnal mind is enmity towards God and the sinful man cannot receive the things of the Spirit, Jesus said we must be born again (Romans 8:7, 1 Corinthians 2:14). When sinners repent of their sins and place their trust in the Savior, the Bible says that they will “pass from death to life” (John 5:24, Romans 6:23, I John 3:14). Ephesians 2:8 clearly states, “For it is by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not from yourself, it is the gift of God, not by works so that no man can boast.”

## FEAR FACTOR

### DEATH

The Bible provides an overlooked evangelistic tool: the fear of death. Everyone has it. Hebrews 2:14-15 says that Jesus came so He could destroy the devil who holds the power of death and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. Man doesn't want to die and questions what will happen when he does die. We must confront the lost with the reality of death, then appeal to their reasoning. We should point out, “If Jesus has defeated death and brought life through the gospel, you owe it to yourself to examine it. You can know what will happen when you die.” Christians should fear the eternal death of the lost and do all they can to reach them. All acts a believer does are trivial compared to warning the lost of spiritual death.

People can become so oblivious to death that only a tragedy or losing someone close to them can make them receptive to the things of God. Sinners who have just lost a loved one will begin asking questions about God, death, and eternity. We must be there for them. Start with expressing genuine sympathy for their loss. Then turn to the serious issue – his salvation. Unless you know the fate of the person who died, don't talk about whether that person went to Heaven or Hell. Just say something like, “God is just and will do what is right on Judgment Day.” We must be careful not to give the impression that God was punishing that person for his sins. Instead, say something like, “All around us we see evidence of a fallen creation. In the beginning there was no disease, pain, or suffering. But when sin entered the world it brought suffering.” Use a transitional phrase like, “When we are confronted with the issue of death it can make us think about God and our eternal salvation. Have you been thinking about spiritual matters?” If he be-

comes offended, be sensitive and willing to move on. When we reach out to people out of love, they generally won't be offended. A Christian who cares about a person's eternal welfare will talk to him about his soul. If the person has bitterness towards God, gently remind him that many people have suffered terrible losses and as a result they have let the suffering bring them to the cross.

## MAN

Most Christians face the fear of man when they witness. Paul admitted that he feared his own weakness and inability. In 1 Corinthians 2:1-4, he said that when he witnessed to the Corinthians he didn't do it with excellent speech or wisdom. He didn't trust in his own strength or ability. Rather, he witnessed to them in weakness, fear, and trembling. Fears have to be put into proper perspective. A witness must take control of his fear, put fear into the proper perspective, and reject the fears the devil puts into his mind. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 10:26-32), Jesus said that what He tells us we are supposed to proclaim. We are not to fear men, but we are to fear God who is able to destroy the soul and body in Hell. Jesus also said that if we disown Him before men, He will disown us before His Father in Heaven. When a witness fears God, his love for the sinner can drive away fear. Meditate on what God is not asking you to do. He is not asking you to die for sharing your faith. We can't save anyone. God requires we proclaim the good news, and He will be helping, strengthening, and upholding us as we do it (Isaiah 41:10). Discouragement or dismay dishonors Him. He's already promised to be with us, and we can't lose courage. We should be ready to use our sword, the Word of God. His Word has power and when it is spoken the enemy's darkness will vanish. Faith in God produces the courage to witness. When we lack courage, we lack faith. If we lack faith, we insult God's integrity. Fear of men can and will be defeated by the knowledge of God's will, ordered priorities, active love, gratitude for the cross, and use of the Law. Instead of fearing men, a faithful witness fears God's wrath.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

Power, boldness, and courage in witnessing come from the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus told His disciples that when the Holy Spirit came they would receive power and as a result they would be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). When Jesus resurrected, death was defeated and salvation had been provided. God had accepted the sacrifice. When Jesus ascended, the disciples were to take the message of eternal life to the lost. However, despite three years of training the disciples were afraid. They hid in fear and needed power, which came at Pentecost. As a result, the fearful disciples became



fearless and were empowered to witness. They didn't hide behind the walls of a church but they went out. Evangelistic zeal is evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence and power. The moment a sinner is born again they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The problem is trying to tap into His power. Being filled by the power of the Spirit requires a person to empty himself and be led by the Spirit. When the believer is filled with the Holy Spirit, his love for Jesus will overflow.

As a result, he will go out into the world with the Gospel. When we rely on the Spirit we have confidence that the One within us is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4). A sinner is drawn, convicted, born, and kept by the Holy Spirit. God has chosen the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe, the moral Law to bring knowledge of sin, and to give His children the privilege of proclaiming it. Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit comes He will reprove the world of sin (which is transgression of the Law - 1 John 3:4), self-righteousness (which is of the Law - Romans 8:4), and of judgment (which is by the Law - Romans 2:12). When we use the Law to bring the knowledge of sin, we simply become instruments the Spirit uses to lead sinners to the Savior.

## FAITH

Through faith a person is saved and has peace with God (Romans 5:1). In conversion, repentance is turning the soul from sin and faith is turning the soul to God. Faith comes by hearing the Word; however, it is not just intellectual belief (Romans 10:17). To be saved people must have faith that the Bible is true, realize their need for the Savior, and put their trust in Him. When sinners trust, submit to, and obey Jesus, they exercise saving faith in Him.

Because God does not lie, we can have faith in His Word. Sinners will say they can't put their faith in God. Questions, which can be adequately answered, often hold them back. However, they turn TV sets on without understanding the mechanics. They take a step of faith, turn it on, and it works; understanding how it works isn't that important. We can't see TV rays because they are invisible and require a receiver. Similarly, God is an invisible spirit who cannot be experienced until the "receiver" is turned on by conviction and experiencing the new birth.

Faith is spiritually what oxygen is physically. Without faith an unbeliever dies spiritually. Without faith a Christian cannot please God. Hebrews 11:35-37 lists men who exercised faith that made these soldiers strong in the Lord. These men were "more than conquerors" because they knew God was on their side and causing them to triumph. Witnessing also requires faith. When we present the Gospel we must trust that Jesus will save and have



faith that the Holy Spirit will do His work.

## HOLINESS

Our influence is proportional to our holiness. The word “holy” means “separate from sin.” God is holy (sinless) and calls believers to holiness. The witness commits to holiness by consistent Bible reading, keeping a tender conscience, having an obedient heart, and living in Godly fear. Holiness means “cut off from sin”, but not from sinners. Jesus was separate from sin but didn’t separate from sinners. When a witness separates from sinners they separate from an opportunity to witness. An effective witness does not present himself as “holier than thou” by not befriending sinners. Instead the witness should show sinners kindness and love.

## PRAYER

Prayer is a way of life for the witness. We are commanded to pray all the time (Ephesians 6:18). Communicating with God can be confession, adoration, communion, intercession, or thanksgiving. However, a failure to pray reflects idolatry. Effective witnessing requires power and wisdom: the results of prayer. Sin in our lives will keep God from listening (Psalms 66:18), and doubting will prevent a person from receiving (James 1:6-7). To be heard, we must pray with:

Faith (Hebrews 11:6)

Clean hands and a pure heart (Psalms 24:3-4)

Heart felt prayers (Matthew 6:7)

A saved person can come before the throne of Grace with confidence that God will answer (Hebrews 4:16). Saved people have to repent of sin even after conversion. God promises He will forgive, forget, justify, and purge the conscience. Powerful prayer comes as a result of close fellowship with God. Through prayer a witness gains strength for witnessing and intercedes by following Jesus’ pattern of standing before God on behalf of sinful man. A witness should pray for the salvation of the lost, an opportunity to witness, and the Holy Spirit’s help when witnessing (Colossians 4:3-4). A witness prays for a sinner’s salvation but does not save or lead the sinner in a prayer: a sinner must pray for himself. “The sinner’s prayer” is not Biblical. If someone committed adultery, you wouldn’t lead them to their spouse and say, “Repeat after me.” A sinner must be told to repent and trust in Jesus. If the sinner wants you to pray with them make sure he understands that only Jesus saves.

# APOLOGETICS

Witnessing will often require contending for the faith (Jude 3). Contending for the faith means not only defending the faith (“apologetics”) but advancing the faith (“evangelism”). Apologetics means defending the faith against objections by providing cogent arguments for what a witness believes. This requires knowing the major errors of other belief systems, explaining the consequence of the error, and presenting the truth. A witness should prove that God exists and that the Bible is true. Taking a stand on doctrine is necessary, but arguing with people who are looking for a fight will do little good. When witnessing, transition from apologetics (addressing the intellect) into the moral Law (addressing the conscience) as soon as possible. When sinners have sincere questions, be prepared with the answer. Ultimately, the Holy Spirit must provide unbelievers with illumination. Their minds have been blinded so they cannot see or understand the light of the Gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4). The following chapters are brief overviews and provide initial conversation starters. Because generalizations have been made, clarify an individual’s beliefs. Extended witnessing opportunities will require more research (see page 54 for more resources).

## EVOLUTION/ATHEISM

Evolutionists attribute creation to a “Big Bang” where the universe just came into existence. However, everything ever made had a creator. God spoke, and the world came into existence. Ask a Big Bang believer:

**“Where did space for the universe come from?”**

**“Where did the initial material come from?”**

**“What sparked the explosion?”**

Evolution tries to eliminate the need for a creator. Without a creator, man doesn’t need a Savior. Creatures reproduce only their kind. While there is microevolution (variations within kinds) there is no macroevolution (one kind evolving into another). Evolution claims that the body has “vestigial organs” leftover from evolution like the appendix or tailbone. However, the appendix is part of the immune system and the tailbone supports muscles needed for bodily functioning. In the forward to *Origin of Species* Sir Arthur Keith admitted, “Evolution is unproved and improvable. We believe it only because the only alternative is special creation and that is unthinkable.”

Animals are created without understanding (Psalms 32:9). Man is created in the image of God as a soul that understands existence. While man is

a moral and rational being, an animal is not. Because man is intellectually superior, God gave man authority over all the animals (Genesis 1:28). Man is the pinnacle of God's creation, not a part of the evolutionary process.

## GENOCIDE

Rejecting Genesis eliminates man's purpose and life's meaning. Genesis explains the origin of sin, curse, death, marriage, and the family. Jesus confirmed the creation of Adam and Eve (Mark 10:6-9) and was a descendent of Adam (Luke 3:38). According to Genesis, God created the world in six literal days of twenty four hours with age already in it. Despite scientific evidence, people scoff at the book of Genesis and remain willingly ignorant of creation and the flood (2 Peter 3:3-8). Creation proves God's existence and the flood proves His wrath towards sin. Evolutionists view death as progression and use the term "survival of the fittest." This eliminates death's purpose. Sin brings forth death (James 1:15, Ezekiel 18:20). If evolution were true, death would be arbitrary and not the expression of God's wrath. The cross would have no meaning and Jesus' death would simply be part of man's progression and not the blood atonement for sin.

## INTELLECTUAL SUICIDE

Evolution is intellectual suicide and an embarrassment (Romans 1:22-23). The theory cannot answer basic questions about creation, matter, energy, or reproduction. Ask an evolutionist, "Can you tell me anything about evolution that is true?" Darwin admitted that millions of missing links (transitional life forms) would have to be discovered to prove the accuracy of his theory. None have been found. Instead, fossils prove creation: there are no fossils indicating that an evolutionary process occurred between created kinds. While we cannot prove that Darwin ever converted or renounced his theory, we can prove that his theories cannot be true.

## NO SUCH THING

"Atheism" doesn't exist. Claiming there is no God (an absolute statement) requires omniscience (all knowledge). Professing atheists are actually agnostic and willfully claim ignorance: they don't know if there is a God. Pride prevents them from seeking God (Psalms 10:4). By acknowledging God's existence, the agnostic is forced to admit accountability to the Creator. The agnostic doesn't find God for the same reason a thief can't find a policeman. Thomas Edison said, "We don't know a millionth of one percent about anything." Suppose an agnostic had 1% of all the knowledge in the universe. In the 99% of knowledge they don't have, could there be enough evidence to prove God's existence? When witnessing to an agnostic ask him

if he knows how many hairs are on the top of his head. He doesn't; therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that there is something he doesn't know. He doesn't know God and it is our job to tell him about Him.

Proving God's existence doesn't require faith. However, a person has to have a brain that works and eyes that can see. Creation proves God exists. Romans 1:20 reads, "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen (*by eyes that can see*) being understood (*by a brain that works*) by the things that are made even his eternal power and Godhead: so they are without excuse" (emphasis added). When a person seeks the Creator, faith is required in the form of trust. A person who comes to God must believe in God and that He rewards those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). George Gallup, a famous statistician, said, "I can prove God statistically: take the human body alone, the chance that all the functions of the individual would just happen is a statistical monstrosity."

# RELATIVISM

Relativism claims that all points of view are equally valid and truth is relative to each individual. There is no standard of right or wrong, and ethics depend on the situation. Relativists accept all religious views except those that teach an absolute God with moral absolutes. While cultural norms (such as driving on a different side of the road) may vary and people may have different preferences (“I prefer red, you prefer blue”), these same principles cannot apply to all areas of experiences or knowledge because this is comparing apples to oranges. Relative truth leaves no standard to judge right or wrong. In their view, all moral views are equal and there isn’t a right to punish anyone. Without absolutes there is no absolute ethics giver (God). When witnessing to a relativist ask, “Can something be both in existence and not in existence at the same time?” Because this is impossible, logical absolutes exist. “Are there physical Laws? Then, why can’t there be spiritual Laws?”

I.B. Relative: “All truth is relative.”  
Christian “Is that absolutely true?”  
(If yes, then all things aren’t relative.)

I.B. Relative: “There are no absolute truths / No one can know anything for sure.”  
Christian: “That’s an absolute statement. Without absolute truths you can’t believe anything including that there are no absolute truths. Nothing is true for you including relativism. Are you sure?”

I.B. Relative: “What is true for you isn’t true for me.”  
Christian: “To me relativism is fraud. So it is. If it isn’t then what is true for me isn’t true for you and relativism is wrong. If it’s true only for me that relativism is wrong then how can it be true?”

I.B. Relative: “That’s your reality not mine.”  
Christian: “Is my reality real? If my reality is different from yours how can my reality contradict your reality? How can two opposite realities that exclude each other exist at the same time?”

## BE A WITNESS

Truth conforms to reality. Truth exists and is found in God. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Jesus authenticated His claims and proved His truth. He promised the Spirit will convict and convince men that the truth is He is the savior and without being born again people will die in their sins and spend eternity in Hell (John 16:7-11). When they are saved they will understand that He is the true God (I John 5:20).

# HINDUISM

Hinduism is the world's oldest organized religion and the third largest. It started in India around 1500-2500 BC. No single person started the religion. There is no single creed, no final truth, and it incorporates a diverse belief system. Nature and human heroes are pursued as gods. Hinduism is divided into Popular (worship of gods through prayer) and Philosophical (studying ancient texts, meditation, and yoga). The primary Hindu god (Brahman) is the one impersonal, ultimate, but unknowable spiritual reality. There are over 330 million gods. Hindus are pantheist and reject creation. Brahman alone exists and everything else is an illusion. He created himself and caused creation (an illusion). Life has no beginning and no end, only cycles of creation and destruction. A soul is Brahman trapped in a physical body. Reincarnations are required before the soul can be liberated from the body. The physical body is also an illusion with little permanent worth. The soul goes into an intermediate state of punishment or reward before rebirth in another body. Rebirths are experienced until karma has been removed to allow the soul to change back into Brahman. There is no concept of rebellion against Brahman. Ignorance or unity with Brahman as well as desire and violation of social duty are humanity's problems. Therefore they see no need for salvation. Freedom from infinite being and final self realization of the truth is the goal of existing.

## BE A WITNESS

When witnessing to a Hindu, stress the importance of Jesus as God's revelation of Himself, the necessity of following Jesus to the exclusion of other deities, and the assurance of salvation that God's grace gives you about hope in the resurrection. Make sure you communicate that your assurance is derived from God's grace and not from good works or your ability to be spiritual (John 14:17, I John 5:20). The best pattern to follow when witnessing to pantheists and pagans is Paul's address on Mars Hill (Acts 17:22-31).

## REINCARNATION

The main competitor to the Christian concept of Heaven and Hell is reincarnation. A Hindu idea, reincarnation teaches that when a person dies his soul does not go to Heaven or Hell but into another type of body on earth. The body can be an insect, fish, animal, or human. The Western concept teaches that the soul always progressively evolves up the scale of being and cannot regress once it has reached the human stage. A person is either born into another human or absorbed back into oneness depending on his karma.

Instead of a personal God who rewards or punishes, a person's karma determines whether or not they will suffer or prosper in the next life. They believe that recall (*déjà vu*, spontaneous, or hypnotic) proves reincarnation. Taking the Bible out of context, they say John the Baptist was a reincarnation of Elijah and Jesus said a person has to be born again (meaning reincarnation not regeneration). Furthermore, they say the Christian church used to teach this until a church council removed it from theology.

## BE A WITNESS

Karma doesn't solve evil. A past life must explain the evil in a present life. Otherwise, evil is eternal. *Déjà vu* can occur either when something triggers a memory or when an illusion of experiencing something happens for the first time. Spontaneous recall never happens under scientific conditions. Hypnotic recall is unreliable and psychic recall is fraudulent. John the Baptist merely came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17).

Elijah never died so he can't be reincarnated. John said he was not Elijah (John 1:21) but rather functioned as a prophet who preached repentance. Jesus taught that the "new birth" is spiritual and happens in the present life (John 3:6). Early church fathers all fought against reincarnation, and there is no historical evidence of any council ever removing it because it was never accepted. Christ's atonement makes reincarnation unnecessary and the body's resurrection makes it impossible. People die and then face judgment (Hebrews 9:27). Reincarnation is a guilty sinner's wishful thinking. Satan's great lie is that people can be saved after they die. Ask them, "What or who were you in your first life?", "What good did you do to become a human?", or "What will you be in the next life?" Present the moral law and stress Hebrews 9:27.

## BUDDHISM

Buddhism is the world's fourth largest religion and has 1 million American followers. Buddha (the Enlightened One), also known as Siddhartha Gautama, was a Hindu who never taught he was a god or that he should be worshiped. He couldn't reconcile suffering, judgment, and evil with the existence of a "good" God. As a result, Buddhism, a form of Atheism, is impersonal and based on self-perfection. Buddhists believe that man's problem is due to ignorance and that there is no salvation. Individual people do not exist, and karma determines everything. Reincarnation, an endless cycle of suffering, makes life's goal a state of nonexistence called nirvana.

The essential doctrines are summarized in four Noble Truths: life is full of suffering; craving causes suffering; suffering will cease when craving ceases; and craving can cease by following the Noble Eight Fold Path. This

Path consists of having the correct views, aspirations, speech, conduct, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, and contemplation. Buddhists are concerned with suffering but deny that suffering is real. Convincing themselves that they have no personal significance, they hope for nirvana, which is only death and extinction. Karma, the endless cycle of reward or punishment for deeds done, is completely rigid and oppressive. There is no appeal, no mercy, and no escape except through efforts of self-perfection. Instead, they struggle to do enough good deeds so that they can break free from a life of suffering. Ironically, Buddhists try to overcome suffering by rooting out desire, which cultivates desires for self-control and nirvana.

## BE A WITNESS

When witnessing to a Buddhist appeal to his condition with phrases like “freedom from suffering” or a “gift of God.” Focus on the good news. Use the eight stages of the Path to introduce him to Christ. [i.e., right views: “Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and there is salvation in no one else” (John 14:6, Acts 4:12)]. By comparison, Buddhism is legendary while Christianity is historical. It is irrational and tries to escape logic and reason. It contradicts science (with a belief that the world is eternal) and historical accuracy.



# ISLAM

Islam is the world's second largest religion and the youngest. There are 6.5 to 8 million Muslims in the US alone. It claims to be the restoration of original monotheism and truth. A works-related religion, Muslims believe a person earns his salvation by submitting to Allah (Arabic name for God), and conforming to the five pillars for salvation. The only way a person has a guarantee of salvation is through "jihad" (exerting force for God either physically or spiritually). As a result, Muslims are aggressive missionaries. They believe Allah is numerically one (as opposed to the Christian Trinity) and unknowable personally but has revealed his will in the Quran (Holy Book). Muhammad was Allah's last and greatest prophet. He got kicked out of Mecca for preaching against paganism and with military force returned in 630 A.D. to establish Islam as the religion of Arabia. The angel Gabriel dictated Allah's words to him, and he wrote the Quran which preexisted from eternity in heaven with God. Islam respects the Torah, David's psalms, and the four Gospels but considers the Quran to stand alone in authority and absoluteness. They consider the Bible corrupt and believe Allah will judge the world at the end of time, using good deeds and obedience to the five pillars as the basis of judgment. The five pillars are confessing no God except Allah and Muhammad as His prophet, praying five times a day facing Mecca, giving 2.5% of capital to the poor or to the spreading of Islam, observing a fast during Ramadan to honor the Quran, and making a once in a lifetime pilgrimage to Mecca. The worst sin a person can commit is to consider God as more than one being. Man is considered weak but not fallen, and original sin was a "lapse" by Adam. Some Muslims believe idolaters may be slain wherever they are found. Paradise is promised for the ones who die fighting for Islam. Christians and Jews are acknowledged as "people of the book" but failure to conform to the confession of Islam labels them as unbelievers. Allah had no son.

## BE A WITNESS

Muslim: "Do you believe in three Gods?"

Christian: "No. God is one in essence but consists of three persons."

Muslim: "How can Jesus be the Son of God?"

Christian: "Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. Jesus was God who became man to die on the cross, rise again, and save us from our sins."

Muslim: "How did Jesus die on the cross if He is God's son? God

substituted Jesus with Judas to die on the cross. God took Him up to heaven like he did Elijah and Jesus never died.”  
Christian: “God is loving and man is lost in sin, so why wouldn’t God provide a sacrifice for sin? That sacrifice had to be as pure as God. Jesus was God whose blood provided the sacrifice required for salvation. Jesus died and then resurrected back to heaven.”

Muslim: “What do you think about Muhammad?”

Christian: “He was a well-meaning man who fought against paganism. However, he didn’t receive a fresh revelation from God. Jesus fulfilled the final prophetic role from God and is the Savior of the world.”

Muslim: “Your Bible is corrupted. There are too many versions and none of them match the original. Our Quran is the only original word of God.

Christian: “Though languages have changed, God’s Word never has. Even though there are many versions, none have changed in doctrine. The Quran is correct when it agrees with the Bible.”

Muslim: “I’ve kept the five pillars and hope I’m going to heaven.”

Christian: “Salvation is a gift from God and comes only through the work of Christ. No one is righteous without Christ’s righteousness. That can’t be earned, only given when people repent of their sin and put their trust in what He did on the cross. You can know where you are going when you die.”

When witnessing to a Muslim start with common ground: there is only one God, Jesus was a prophet, and Moses was a prophet. Because most Muslims know of their sinfulness, take them through the spiritual nature of the Ten Commandments. A Muslim may say he is innocent because he confesses his sins to Allah. Use Surah 10:54 which says, “Every soul that has sinned, if it possessed all that is on the earth, would fain give it in ransom.” In other words, if he possessed the whole world and offered it to God as a sacrifice for his sins, it wouldn’t be enough to provide atonement. Then tell him about the atonement he can have through faith in Jesus who was more than a prophet - He is God.

# CULTS

Cults are religions that are supposed to be built on Christian truths but pervert the truth by denying the deity of Jesus, adding works to salvation, and corrupting doctrine. Essential doctrines such as the trinity, the resurrection, and salvation by grace alone are rejected by either misquoting or adding to the Bible. All cults claim special revelation and privilege. Their followers must do works for salvation. However, the Bible says salvation is by grace and not works (Ephesians 2:8-9).

A man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law (Romans 3:28). Earning salvation would mean Christ died in vain (Galatians 2:16, 21). Jesus didn't save us because of good things we have done but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit whom he poured out graciously through Jesus Christ so that being justified by His grace we can have hope for eternal life (Titus 3:5-7). Cults often misuse James 2:26, "Faith without works is dead." In this verse, James says that real faith produces works as a result of salvation, not to obtain salvation. Faith must be placed in the real Jesus. Who is the "real" Jesus? In Mormonism Jesus is the devil's brother and the result of sexual intercourse with a god from another planet. Jehovah's Witnesses say He's the archangel Michael. The Jesus of the Bible is God. Jesus reveals the Father and gives eternal life. Cults twist scripture by taking it out of context, reading into the scripture information that isn't there, picking and choosing passages, ignoring other explanations, quoting a verse without giving a location, defining key words incorrectly, and mistranslating. When witnessing to members of a cult we need to understand their doctrine as well as our own. We need to study systematic theology to not only be able to answer their questions but to also discern what is wrong with their system. Jesus warned that false prophets would arise and deceive many (Mark 13:21-22). He knew there would be the spirit of the antichrist, which can take its form in the cults.

# JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

When he was eighteen, Charles Russell started a Bible study where he taught there wasn't a Hell and people simply cease to exist at death. He started a magazine called the Watchtower and an organization called the Watchtower Society. The cult was later named the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW), and today there are approximately a million followers in the US. Though the JW say the Bible is the word of God, they believe that only their New World Translation (NWT) is correct. Although they claim it to be the closest to the original Bible languages, the NWT wasn't written by scholars. The translation reflects a bias against the trinity and the deity of Jesus. Instead of Jesus (the Word) being God, John 1:1 reads that the Word was "a god." JW teach that God is Jehovah and that His attributes are wisdom, justice, love, and power. However, He is a spirit with a spiritual body and is not omnipresent. They reject the trinity. According to the JW, Jesus had three periods of existence. In his pre-human existence, God (The Father) created Jesus and used Jesus to create everything else. Jesus was with God during creation and His name was Michael the archangel. In Jesus' second stage of existence, He became the Messiah at baptism, was executed, and rose again only spiritually. Now that Jesus is in his third stage, He is alive and will come back to rule over the earth. The NWT doesn't capitalize Holy Spirit and says that He is God's invisible active force. The spirit within a person given at birth departs at death. When people die they lose consciousness and go to Sheol, the grave of mankind. Adam's sin in the garden required an atonement and, because Jesus was the only "perfect man" after Adam, that atonement was Jesus. JW teach that if they obey Jehovah's commands as interpreted by their society, they can have hope for salvation. The requirements include baptism by immersion, association with the society, righteous conduct, and loyalty to Jehovah. Instead of assurance of salvation, a person can only hope for a resurrection. At the resurrection only 144,000 faithful JW will go to Heaven. The remaining JW don't go to heaven but rule on Earth with Jesus. After the millennium Satan, his demons, and the unfaithful will be annihilated. The second death is nonexistence. Since God is love and just, there is no Hell.

## BE A WITNESS

Instead of debating the trinity, simply ask the JW, "Is Jesus really the archangel Michael? If so show me the scripture." He will present five scriptures: foremost prince (Daniel 10:13), prince of Daniel's people (Daniel 10:21), standing in behalf of Daniel's people (Daniel 12:1), archangel who disputed the devil over the body of Moses (Jude 9), and participant in Heavenly conflict against a dragon (Revelation 12:7). Ask, "Which of these verses says Jesus is Michael?" Instead of a prince, Jesus is King of Kings (Revelation 17:14). Jesus' name is far above every rule, au-

thority, power, dominion, and title (Ephesians 1:21). In Jude 9, Michael said, “The Lord rebuke you.” During His temptation, Jesus rebuked the devil. JW say the expression “with an archangel’s voice,” used in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, means Jesus is an archangel. However, the expression simply means that the archangel, like God’s trumpet, will herald Jesus’ coming, not that Jesus is an archangel. Have the JW read the first chapter of Hebrews out loud. Jesus is the Son. No angel could have that title. God told the angels to worship Jesus. Angels refused to be worshiped (Revelation 19:10), but Jesus didn’t. (Matthew 2:11, 8:2, 9:18) Angels are ministering spirits to serve those who inherit salvation through Jesus. Proving Jesus isn’t an angel doesn’t prove the trinity but puts the burden of proof on the JW to answer who Jesus is. By doing so you’ve shown the JW that his society has twisted scripture. Now you can present the Gospel.

JWs don’t know who Jesus is, and it is our duty to tell them. In John 8:24, Jesus says, “Unless you believe that I AM (God) you will die in your sins.” Tell the JW that unless he acknowledges Jesus as Jehovah he will die in his sins. The JW thinks he is prepared to attack the trinity. Instead, be ready to prove Jesus is Jehovah. Isaiah said he saw Jehovah (Isaiah 6:1), but no man has seen God the Father. John 12:41 says that Isaiah saw Jesus’ glory and spoke of Him. God commands we worship no one but Him (Exodus 34:14). But one day everyone will worship Jesus as God (Romans 14:11, Philippians 2:9-11). That would be idolatry if Jesus isn’t God. Isaiah 44:6 calls Jehovah the first and last, and Revelation 22:13 says Jesus is the first and last. Romans 10:9 says, “We must confess Jesus as Lord.” The Greek word for “Lord” in this verse is “Kurios,” which is the same Greek word for “Jehovah.” These verses prove that “Jehovah” is used for both God the Father and God the Son because they both possess deity.

Within Jesus is all the fullness of the deity (Colossians 2:9). Jesus has the same attributes as God because Jesus is God. Jesus forgives sins, judges the world, and controls nature. Only God can do these things, so Jesus must be God. In the book of John, Jesus makes His “I am” statements. No created being or angel could say those things about himself or make other statements such as “come to me and rest,” “no one knows the Father except I reveal it to him,” or “you’ve seen Me so you have seen the Father.” Jesus claimed to be one (equal) with God (John 10:30). JW say that Jesus was one with God only in purpose. Then why did the Jews want to stone Him? They knew Jesus was claiming to be God. Isaiah prophesied of Jesus’ coming and said that His name would be Immanuel (“God with us”).

Jesus is God, the Creator of all things (Colossians 1:15-17). JW say that Jesus was created by Jehovah. “First born” and “first created” are two different terms in Greek with two different meanings: “protoktistos” and “prototokos,” respectively. “Protoktistos,” used in Colossians 1:15, indicates a position of authority or supremacy and means “first in rank.” There is no verse in the entire Bible that says Jesus was created by God the Father.

# MORMONISM

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS), or Mormonism, was founded by Joseph Smith on April 6, 1830. Smith claimed that God the Father and Jesus visited Him and told him to establish the “true church.” Starting with six members, the church has grown to 5.1 million in the US. Mormons teach that after the New Testament, all churches became heretical. Mormonism claims to be the restoration of the “true church” and priesthood, and that truth and salvation are only found in the LDS church. Mormons consider four books along with the teachings of their prophets to be the inspired words of God. The KJV is one of these books, “as so far as it is translated correctly” with Smith’s 600 “corrections” to its text. According to the Book of Mormon, the Bible is missing parts which the other books complete. Mormons are taught to filter reading the Bible through the rest of the Mormon books so the words mean something different from the intended meaning. The Book of Mormon records a supposed migration of Israelites in 600 BC to America. Smith claimed that their story was recorded in the “Reformed Egyptian” language on a golden plate. Ironically, Smith was the only person to ever see the plate, and the language doesn’t exist. These plates became the Book of Mormon. Mormons believe that Elohim, the god of the universe, was a man who lived on another planet and became god, was exalted to godhood, and inherited his own universe. God is confined to a body of flesh and bones, and while he is omniscient and omnipotent, he is not omnipresent. There is no trinity. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three separate and distinct gods. The Heavenly Father organized this earth and produces spiritual children in heaven who are destined for human life on earth. The first of his children was Jehovah. Humans, Jesus, and Lucifer are his children. Jesus was born as a result of God having sexual relations with Mary, guaranteed humankind resurrection by atoning for Adam’s sins, did not die for all sins, visited North America after His resurrection, and established the true church with them. Though Mormons will often agree with Biblical arguments, they add to the Bible, redefine key terms, and present a very different Jesus. Mormons try to earn their salvation, erase the consequences of their sins, and reach god-hood by obeying the teachings of their church and prophets. Mormons believe in universal salvation - they believe almost everyone goes to Heaven. However, there are a few people who go to Hell and become sons of perdition. They believe in three levels of Heaven, but only faithful Mormons will reach godhood or enter the celestial kingdom and produce spirit babies with their wives. Mormons call Hell “outer darkness,” which is reserved for Satan, his demons, and a few apostate Mormons. The lowest level of Heaven is for non-Mormons, murderers, liars, and

thieves. By keeping Mormon teaching and obeying the church and the Prophet, Joseph Smith, after the Resurrection, worthy Mormon males may pass the celestial guards, bringing their wives with them, and achieve a status similar to Elohim- the god of this world. They stress Matthew 5:48 (“be perfect”) and hold perfection as an attainable goal. Every privilege within Mormonism is conditional based on a person’s worthiness. They must keep the Word of Wisdom by abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine, tithe, attend sacrament meetings, support the prophet, do temple works, and actively support the church.

## BE A WITNESS

Jesus taught that His church would not fail (Matthew 16:17-18). A “true church” follows the teachings of Christ and the first apostles (Acts 2:42). A test of true prophets in the Bible was that every prediction they made would come true (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). However, Smith predicted a temple being built in Missouri within his lifetime that was never built. The Bible warns against anyone adding to its teaching (Revelation 22:18) because it’s the only book inspired by God and usable for doctrine (2 Timothy 3:15-17). God is a spirit and is not confined to a physical body (John 4:24). God was pre-existent without a father (Psalms 90:2). God is one, there are no other gods, and there won’t be any more gods (Galatians 3:20, I Corinthians 8:5-6, Isaiah 43:10; 45:5).

The Bible teaches that humans are not pre-existent but formed in the womb (Isaiah 44:2). A person inherits a sinful nature and can only find peace by experiencing the new birth. Though the believer is transformed into Christ’s likeness no one becomes “a god.” Jesus died for all sins. Ask the Mormon, “What can you do to be at peace with the Heavenly Father?” This will reveal the basis of his salvation - works. Show the Mormon the severity of sin by using the Law and the impossibility of perfection. When it comes to salvation, there is a big difference between the Book of Mormon and the Bible. 2<sup>n</sup> Nephi 25:23 states, “For we know that it is by grace that we are saved *after all we can do.*” Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “It is by grace we are saved through faith, and not of ourselves it is the gift of God, and not of works.” Grace is unmerited favor and *in spite of* all we have done. Help them understand Hell by using the term “outer darkness.” When they realize the possibility of outer darkness, we need to present the real Jesus. The Jesus of the Bible is not just a perfect child but God in the flesh. He was eternally existent with the Father (John 1:1), born of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18), lived a perfect life, died on the cross for all sins, and was raised from the dead. He will come again and judge the world. When we are talking about Jesus, we are not talking about “a god” who was created him-



self as a spirit of man but the eternal God who creates the spirit of man (Zachariah 12:1, Colossians 1). Tell the Mormon, “If I’m wrong, then I get to go to the third heaven. But if the Bible is right then you are following a false Jesus and headed for outer darkness.” Ask him if he is worthy enough or if he has done enough to enter heaven.

Because Joseph Smith plagiarized the KJV, the Book of Mormon actually contains some truth as illustrated by the chart below.

BIBLE	BOOK OF MORMON REFERENCES
One God	I Nephi 13:41; Alma 11:28:29
God Is a Spirit	Alma 18:26-29
God Is Unchangeable	Mormon 9:8-9
Jesus is God	2 Nephi 26:12, Mosiah 15:1-4, Alma 11:38-39, Ether 3:1r, Mormon 3:21, Mosiah 116:13-15
Repentance and Faith	Alma 22:9-14
Eternal Life In Christ	Mosiah 18:13b; 3 Nephi 9:21-22
Hell is Endless Torment Destiny Sealed at Death	Jacob 6:10, Mosiah 2:39 Alma 34:32, 40:11-14
God came in flesh, lived among men, was crucified, redeemed his people, and called the Son of God.	Mosiah 15:1-4, 18:13b III Nephi 9:15,21-22, Alma 5:48



# CATHOLICISM

Catholicism started in AD 313 when Constantine legalized and blended Christianity with paganism. Catholics may claim to be a part of the first church and that Peter was the first pope. However, their teachings were nothing like early apostolic teaching. Radically different doctrines were established such as sacraments, purgatory, petitioning dead saints for prayers, confessing sins to man instead of God, and considering tradition as authoritative as scripture. The Catholic Church accepted the Apocryphal books because some versions of the Septuagint included them, a few “church fathers” used them, some early church councils accepted them, and more recently some of the manuscripts were found along with the Dead Sea Scrolls. Because the Catholic Church believes the Bible emphasizes tradition and does not explicitly state that only scripture is authoritative, “Sola Scriptura” (“scripture alone”) was rejected. The Roman Catholic Church believes it produced the Bible, and the Pope is Christ’s representative on earth. Taking John 20:29-23 out of context, Catholics believe that an ordained priest has the authority to forgive sins. They believe Popes are infallible when speaking “ex cathedra” (from the chair) and agree with Catholic tradition and previous councils. Though Jesus is God, they don’t believe His death paid the full penalty for sins. Even those who die in a state of grace must spend time in purgatory purging from their sins. Catholicism teaches that Mary is holy and worthy of worship. She was sinless from conception, never sinned, was unable to sin, and remained a virgin. She was raised the third day after she died, her body and soul were taken into Heaven, and her authority is above Christ’s. Since Jesus came from her the only way to Him is through her. Mary suffered with Christ and redeemed the human race.

Salvation is not by grace alone but rather comes through adherence to the seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, Mass, penance, extreme unction (last rights), marriage, and ordination. Jesus’ blood is worthless unless the priest dispenses and applies it through the sacraments. His blood is not sufficient for all sins, but good works make up for the rest either for oneself or others. Heaven is the eternal reward for good works. God’s grace is granted through baptism, and infused by the Holy Spirit enabling a person to do good works. Justification is an effort between God and man and can be lost by failing to perform good works. Works are needed to regain justification. Catholics generally don’t believe a person can know when they are saved, but instead they begin the process of salvation by baptism. They further believe baptizing an infant erases original sin. Mass is a continuation of the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross and is a recrucifixion. During Mass,

Jesus offers himself repeatedly as a sacrifice for sin, which they believe is just as efficacious as the sacrifice on Calvary. By the power of the priest, the wine and bread actually become Christ's blood and body. People in purgatory can be helped by the prayer and good works (i.e., purchases of mass and indulgences) of people still living. During penance, a priest forgives sins committed after baptism. A person confesses to the priest who imposes acts of penance such as praying, scripture reading, fasting, or other good works. Anyone can be saved if they are baptized even if they don't know Jesus. Justification (a right standing with God) requires and is maintained through continual good works and adherence to church doctrine.

## BE A WITNESS

History proves that the Roman Catholic Church was not the original church (for more information go to [www.trailofblood.com](http://www.trailofblood.com)). The Apocryphal books are not accepted because they were rejected by *most* "church fathers", contain historical and doctrinal errors (i.e., Mass, sacraments, prayers for the dead), and contradict the rest of the Bible. "Sola Scriptura", based solidly on clear Bible teaching, doesn't have to be explicitly stated. Tradition doesn't replace scripture, and only the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Man cannot add or subtract from God's Word (Revelation 22:18-20). All truth needed for faith, salvation, and spiritual life are taught in the Bible. The Bible warns against believing teachings based on man's opinion or writings other than scripture (I Corinthians 4:6). God's Word alone is sufficient for salvation, possesses absolute authority, and equips the believer for every good work (2 Timothy 3:15-17). God alone forgive sins. Since Jesus is God, He is the only man who can forgive sins. Putting John 20:19-23 into context, the apostles were given the authority to proclaim the Gospel and instruct people on how to have their sins forgiven. Jesus taught that He would build the Church on the knowledge of and relationship with Him. Mary was a great woman but not sinless or a perpetual virgin. Mary and Joseph eventually produced Jesus' brothers and sisters (Matthew 13:55), who didn't believe until after the resurrection (John 7:5). Before Mary and Joseph came together she was found with child (Matt. 1:18). Mary was a sinner who recognized her Savior (Luke 1:47). Although Catholics may deny that they worship Mary, they rely on her to intercede with her Son on their behalf and believe that all blessings and grace come through her. The Bible teaches that there is one mediator between God and man – Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5). A woman tried to bless Mary's womb and Jesus corrected her (Luke 11:27-28). Jesus' blood purifies from all sin (1 John 1:7; Romans 3:23-26). Instead of a priest who offers sacrifices that can't forgive sins, we have a High Priest who offered one eternal sacrifice for every past and future sin (Hebrews 10:10-12). Once Jesus

made His sacrifice, “it was finished” and there is no need for Him to sacrifice Himself again (Hebrews 9:25).

Explain that justification is God declaring a sinner righteous (right with God). Use Romans 3:20-28 to explain that it is based entirely on Jesus’ sacrifice and is a gift of grace through faith. Salvation cannot be attained through works because man’s righteousness and his deeds are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). It is a free gift (Romans 6:23) that cannot be earned (Ephesians 2:1-10). The Bible does not teach that a person is justified by baptism or can have original sin erased through infant baptism. A man is justified by faith without doing the “deeds of the Law” (Romans 3:28, Galatians 2:16). “Deeds of the Law” are anything a person does to achieve or maintain this right standing with God, including sacraments. Because grace is God’s unmerited favor, how can anyone obtain it through merit? If salvation is by grace, it cannot be the result of works (Romans 11:6). Salvation is from God and kept by God based on what He has done and not what we can do. Adding to His finished work by sacrament or purgatory is portraying His atonement as insufficient. Like Paul in Philippians 3:8-9, use your testimony to prove that people can know they are saved: I considered my good works to be nothing so that I could be saved; “not having my own righteousness, which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” God dispenses grace directly through Jesus and the Holy Spirit, not through the Church or sacraments.

# CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Church of Christ claims that God used certain men to restore the New Testament Church in the early 1800's. These men were Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton Stone, and Walter Scott. Thomas was an Irish immigrant and a Presbyterian preacher until he was excluded for trying to reform the church. His son Alexander helped him to establish a church. To refute their infant baptism (not to have sins forgiven), they were baptized by an unauthorized Baptist preacher. The group joined a Baptist association, used the title "Christian Baptist" to publish their restoration, but never joined a Baptist Church. The association excluded them when in 1827 Walter Scott discovered that their "ancient gospel" was baptismal regeneration. Later, they added confession before repentance, losing salvation, having the right church name, and banning musical instruments to their "ancient gospel". Barton Stone, a Presbyterian, was preaching a revival in Kentucky. Unsure as to what to tell sinners to do to be saved, he used Acts 2:38. It startled the congregation, but a man was baptized to be saved. The Campbell and Stone groups joined fellowship in 1832 and formed the Church of Christ. Alexander became the "master spirit" of the reformation, and his teachings became the foundational doctrines of the Church of Christ. Though none of the founders were baptized for salvation, they claimed a person's sins were literally forgiven through baptism. A person can't believe in Christ, pray, or be saved without being baptized. Baptism changes a sinner's condition, immersion is conversion, and no one is converted unless baptized. As soon as a person is put under water his sins are forgiven. Campbell acknowledged salvation without baptism in several of his famous debates where he often contradicted himself. He taught that the Church was set up by the Apostles on the day of Pentecost where the Gospel was first preached and baptism first administered. John the Baptist and Jesus died under the Old Testament. Campbell was the first to plead Christ's cause since the early church completely fell away. He denied God's foreknowledge, the security of the believer, and the Holy Spirit's work in regeneration. Only His church had a Biblical name though he pleaded for Christian union without denomination. They primarily use four main verses to support baptismal regeneration: Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16, 1 Peter 3:21, and John 3:5.

## BE A WITNESS

The people at Pentecost, who had already called on the name of the Lord (Acts 2:21), believed the Gospel, and were purified by faith, asked Peter, "What shall we do?" They didn't ask, "What shall we do *to be saved*?" Peter's reply in Acts 2:38 has since been used to teach baptismal regenera-

tion. The Greek word “eis” in this verse doesn’t mean “in order to obtain”. “Eis” is used 1700 times in the Bible, but no Greek lexicon gives this definition as the word’s primary or secondary meaning. The King James Version translates “eis” forty-eight times but never gives it this meaning. Instead, “eis” is translated as “with reference to”. For example, a leper was told to make an offering “for” his cleansing as Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. The man’s offering was not to obtain his healing, because he was already healed (Mark 1:44).

Mark 16:16 says, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but *he that believes not* shall be damned.” The Church of Christ adds that a person must be baptized and maintain his salvation. However, John 3:18 proves that belief alone is sufficient to escape condemnation.

Ananias addresses Paul by telling him to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16). However, Paul had seen, heard, believed, obeyed, repented, been called to preach, and was filled with the Holy Ghost all before he was baptized (Acts 26:15-18; Acts 9:6). Paul was baptized to join the church and prove outwardly what had already happened on the inside.

First Peter 3:21 says that baptism saves not by the putting away of the flesh but by the answer of a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Christ. The Biblical response of a good conscience, given only by repentance and faith, is joining the church through baptism. Instead of being saved “by” the flood waters (or baptism), Noah’s family was saved while “in” the waters. Their salvation came from the ark, which represents Jesus who saves us from sin.

A person who is saved will keep a good conscience (not salvation) by coming out from the world and joining the church. “Born of water” (John 3:5) could either mean a physical birth or as an emblem of the spirit (“kai”), but not baptism. This passage also proves that the plan of salvation was the same before Pentecost.

Jesus said His church would exist to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20) and not even the gates of hell would prevail against it (Matthew 16:18). Jesus set up his church (“ekklesia” or “assembly”) when he called disciples and formed an assembly of believers who were baptized. During his earthly ministry, Christ taught church discipline (Matthew 18:17) and commissioned His church (Matthew 28:18-20). He told Peter that upon this rock He would build (edify) His church through all ages. Names for the church (before Pentecost) included “bride” (John 3:29), “flock” (Luke 12:32), and “house” (Hebrews 3:6). The Apostles and 120 other people were already in the church and 3,000 were added *unto* them (Acts 1:15, Acts 2:41). The church before Pentecost existed in the same form it does today, with proper government, ordinances, and commission. The early church was waiting for a special en-

dowment of the Spirit to aid in its mission. The Law and prophets (OT) were until John, not until the temple veil was torn indicating the believer could now enter God's presence (Luke 16:16). Because John baptized Christ, this baptism had to have been Christian baptism.

Baptism is declaring publicly that Christ has already remitted sins through His death and resurrection. Likewise, animal sacrifices couldn't take away sins, but were types and shadows of Christ who sacrificed Himself and could take away sins (Hebrews 10:11; 9:12). Jesus' death and blood was for sin (Matthew 26:28). Scriptures refer to baptism as a burial but never as a birth. Death to sin and a new life in Christ takes place in regeneration before the burial, and a person is supposed to walk in the newness of life (Romans 6:4-6).

Salvation requires regeneration and by definition is not baptism. Regeneration is by the Holy Spirit, but baptism is by agency of the church and man. Salvation is an instantaneous operation of God, but baptism requires a person to wait for water and a baptizer. Regeneration is a change of the heart when God forgives a person of their sin; baptism is the testimony of that change. People can come out of the water just as condemned in their sins as they were before (Simon the Sorcerer - Acts 8:21). Acts 2:41 says "as many believed were baptized in order to bear testimony of the resurrection of Christ experienced in their heart. A baptizer can deny people baptism until they prove they have experienced regeneration; for example, John the Baptist required fruits of repentance. Peter asked who could keep Gentile converts who already had the Holy Ghost from being baptized (Acts 10:47). Salvation is found in Jesus alone but baptism is contingent upon a man and church authority. Regeneration is the gift of life but baptism is the act of obedience of having that life. Salvation is the application of Jesus' blood but baptism is the application of water in a burial already preceded by Christ's blood. Jesus alone saves but He never baptized (John 4:2) except through the Apostles before Pentecost. Paul was instrumental in many people getting saved and wasn't called to baptize but to preach the Gospel (I Corinthians 1:17). Jesus gave the requirements for salvation when he said to repent, believe, and be born again. He told the church to baptize and make disciples, but that was a commission to the church and the church doesn't save. When he is truly saved he is made a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17). The believer has the Holy Spirit to witness in Himself that God has sealed him and given him a new heart, possession of a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which no man knows until he receives it (I John 5:10, Romans 8:16, 2 Corinthians 1:22, Revelation 2:17). On the day of Pentecost, Peter said that whosoever calls on the Lord shall be saved (Acts 2:21). That call does not require baptism but requires the Lord to answer and remove the conviction, cleanse a soul from sin, and create a new heart.



# PENTECOSTAL

In 1901 Charles Parham gave his Bethel Bible College students an unusual homework assignment: study the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of tongues. After explaining their conclusions, Parham laid hands on a student, and she spoke in tongues. The event led to the Azusa Street revival in 1906 and launched the Pentecostal movement. While there are differences, both Pentecostal and charismatic movements are based on experience, phenomena, emotion, and feelings. Pentecostalism misinterprets Acts 2:1-4 and adheres to the doctrine of subsequence (a person prays to receive baptism of the Spirit after conversion resulting initially in the ability to speak in tongues). Pentecostalism refers to a wide variety of theological interpretations and practices all under a loose central belief system. There are three divisions: Wesleyan Holiness, Higher Life, and Oneness. Wesleyan Holiness churches (Church of God) believe in Christian perfection and the knowledge of all sins. Higher Life (Full Gospel) puts an emphasis on sanctification and baptism in the Holy Spirit. Another term for Full Gospel is foursquare, which refers to Pentecostalism's four basic beliefs: Jesus saves, baptizes with the Holy Spirit, heals bodily, and is coming again. The Assemblies of God, organized in 1914 and the fourth largest sect of Christianity, are a combination of Wesleyan Holiness and Higher Life. Oneness Pentecostal is much like a cult. They believe that speaking in tongues is a required sign of salvation, Christ was not pre-existent, Jesus was the Father, and that a person must be baptized "in Jesus" name for salvation. Traditional Pentecostals, except for the Oneness division, are mostly sound in their teachings of salvation but are known for poor Biblical interpretations. They also make the same mistakes of the early Corinthian church by using their "signs" in a disruptive and unedifying way that promotes self rather than the Savior. They claim that Pentecost is ongoing or in a later phase, and therefore tongues, healings, and miracles have continued as spiritual gifts.

## BE A WITNESS

Pentecostals believe in a literal interpretation of the Bible, but many are like the Jews Paul spoke of when he said, "They have zeal for God but not in accordance to knowledge" (Romans 10:2). Instead of automatically concluding that the person isn't saved, ask them to relate their salvation experience. Using the term "experience" will build common ground. All "experiences" must be tested by the Word of God which is more sure and not a matter of personal interpretation (2 Peter 1:19-21). Experiences are validated by scripture because they conform to God's plan and are a result of obedience. Scripture is sufficient (2 Timothy 3:15-17) but not all experi-

ences are of the right spirit (I John 4:1). Paul preached and reasoned from scripture (Acts 28:23). God revealed Himself in rational revelation that requires a mind for reasoning, renewal, and understanding of truth (Ephesians 4:17-32). God's revelation was completed when the canon of scripture was closed (Jude 3) and nothing can be added to the faith (Revelation 22:18-19). The New Testament gift of prophesy is proclamation of already revealed truth for edification, exhortation, and comfort (1 Corinthians 14:3) not new revelation.

Pentecostals are known for poor biblical interpretation. Matthew 12:31-32 is used to equate challenging doctrine with blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This verse actually teaches that sinners can be forgiven of anything through repentance and faith except for continually rejecting (blaspheming) the Holy Spirit's conviction. Since Jesus never changes (Hebrews 13:8), Pentecostals believe Jesus' baptizing with evidence of tongues still goes on today. Jesus' essence doesn't change but His historical manifestation does. Jesus wasn't on Earth in the Old Testament, there were no gifts of tongues during His earthly ministry, and the gifts of Pentecost were not eternal (1 Corinthians 13:8-10). Mark 16:17-18 is applied to all believers. Some churches add "accidentally" to snake bites and other churches allegorize snakes for Satan. Christians are supposed to beg for these signs. Not only are these passages historically debatable, the only group of believers who possessed these signs was the apostolic community and they never sought for them. Using 1 Peter 2:24, Pentecostals teach that by Jesus' wounds people will continue to be healed physically. Physical healing is never mentioned in the verse. Jesus bore *sin* not sickness, and *were healed* refers to humanity's sin sickness (past tense).

Biblical miracles were always done in relation to prophecy or commands of a religious figure which validated their message or sending. They were not isolated supernatural events. God still works miracles but doesn't rely on human agency. Pentecostals claim to have restored the "Holy Spirit power" so they can do what apostles did. Biblical miracles happened in three periods: Moses-Joshua, Elijah-Elisha, Jesus and apostles. None of the periods lasted more than one hundred years. Miracles were performed to introduce new eras of revelation, authenticate the messenger, and call attention to new revelation. When the canon was complete God's revelation was finished (Jude 3). The Bible gives five commands in relation to the Spirit: Walk (Galatians 5:25) Do not grieve (Ephesians 4:30), Be filled (Ephesians 5:18), Don't quench (I Thessalonians 5:19), Pray (Jude 20). The Bible doesn't say seek miracles or mention being slain. Instead it says that all things are supposed to be done properly and orderly (I Corinthians 14:23,40). God is not a God of confusion (14:33). Spiritual gifts are given for edifying the church



not causing chaos, show, or the benefit of the individual (I Corinthians 14:4-5,17,26). Pentecostals are making the same mistake the Corinthians did and need to study Paul's strong rebuke.

People should be more concerned with their soul than they are their body (Matthew 10:28). Even if "faith healers" could heal the way Jesus did people wouldn't believe. Salvation comes by hearing and believing the Gospel (Romans 10:17) not experiencing miracles or healings. Jesus, apostles, and those who had received the gift healed with word or touch, instantly, totally, anyone, organic disease, resuscitated the dead, and could use the gifts at will. Since faith healers cannot, they do not possess the biblical gift but rather blame God or a person's faith for inadequate healing. Gifts of healing were given to convince unbelievers not to keep Christians healthy. Jesus said the sick need a doctor (Matthew 9:12) and though God healed Hezekiah he still needed a treatment (Isaiah 38:21).

The unknown tongue (1 Corinthians 14) does not mean a tongue of a different world. "Unknown tongue" was added by translators, not in the original Greek, and is in italics indicating that it was added. The tongue (1 Corinthians 13:1) was not ecstatic, heavenly, or angelic language. Paul insisted that someone should interpret (I Corinthians 14:13) so other people would be edified (14:5). Since the charismatic tongues are not languages they are not the biblical gift of tongues. Tongues were intended as a sign to National Israel, a transition between the Old and New Covenants, a sign to unbelievers, and are no longer needed to edify the church. Spiritual gifts were given to prove the validity of the early church not for a believer's benefit.

# SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS

William Miller, a Baptist minister, used Daniel 8:14 to predict Christ's return in 1844. When Christ didn't come that year, Hiram Edson said that Christ began a second phase of ministry in the second apartment of the Holy Sanctuary to perform an investigative judgment. The theory of investigative judgment depicts Jesus recording and keeping track of believers' sins. Those already dead are examined and, if worthy, will be a part of the first resurrection. People who are still alive are being judged by their ability to keep the Ten Commandments. All sins committed after salvation must be repented of and forgiven or a person loses his salvation. After the investigative judgment, the righteous will have sins blotted out and Jesus will return to Earth. Satan ("Azazel" in Leviticus 16) will be punished for causing sin. Joseph Bates added the doctrine of Sabbath-keeping: God instituted Sabbath observance as a test of loyalty, and the fourth commandment is the "seal of God". During the Tribulation period, a counterfeit Sabbath will be proclaimed, and those who worship on Sunday will bear the "mark of the beast". Christ's loyal followers will continue to worship on the Sabbath. Ellen White developed the "Spirit of Prophecy". Through visions, prophecies, and a divinely inspired interpretation of scripture she established the Seventh Day Adventist movement in 1850, and the church was organized in 1863. During seventy years of ministry, Ellen worked as the "Lord's messenger," and her writings are an authoritative source of truth. Seventh Day Adventists agree with Biblical Christianity in several areas but also uphold several theological errors. For example, they believe the changing of the Sabbath to Sunday was a sign that the early church fell away. A "remnant church," the Seventh Day Adventists, remained loyal. They also believe that at Judgment, all saved people will become part of this "church." Jesus was revealed as Michael the angel before He became human. He took on human flesh but not a human soul. "Soul" represents the whole man, and the soul sleeps until the body resurrects. The righteous will be resurrected when Jesus comes back, but the unrighteous will be resurrected after the millennium, cast into Hell, and annihilated. They believe that salvation is by grace, but justification is by faith in obedience to the Commandments. One must keep the commandments and perform acts of righteousness to maintain salvation.

## BE A WITNESS

Adventists are taught that they are God's true church and that "Sunday Worshipers" are apostate. Present the Bible, not your interpretation. Adequately explain their proof texts and ask questions:

"Is an investigative judgment necessary?"

"Why face God alone when Jesus always lives to intercede. (Hebrews 7:25)?"

"How can salvation be by grace but maintained through good works?"

By defending Ms. White's infallibility, worshiping on the Sabbath (Saturday) only, investigative judgment, and maintaining salvation by works, an Adventist puts himself under the Law (Galatians 3:10) and believes a different gospel (Galatians 1:8-9).

Ellen White was a well-meaning lady. Her excessive writings (17 times larger than the Bible), visions (Enoch on Jupiter), and authority (Human) resulted from Psychomotor Epilepsy. Several of her predictions were false: she wasn't alive when Jesus came back, England didn't attack the United States in 1862, and Jerusalem was rebuilt. Ms. White wasn't a Bible scholar and didn't know Bible languages. Adventist heresy can often be defeated through analyzing the original languages, proper Biblical interpretation, and because of wording, a different version than the KJV.

Constantine made Sunday a public holiday. Early Christians were already gathering on the first day of the week to celebrate the resurrection (Acts 2:1, 20:7, I Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10). Church fathers recorded Sunday as the Lord's Day before Constantine (Ignatius 110 AD, Justin Martyr 165 AD, Barnabas 120-150 AD). The Sabbath was the sign of the old covenant (Exodus 31:16-17, Deuteronomy 5:15), but God announced a new covenant (Jeremiah 31:31). When Jesus fulfilled the Law, Christians entered into the New Covenant with the signs of baptism and Lord's Supper. Jesus chose to meet with the disciples on Sunday. He ascended, sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and appeared to the apostles all on the first day of the week. Keeping the Sabbath was the only commandment not mentioned in the New Testament, not included in the instructions given to believers by the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15), and was only given to Jews (Exodus 31:13). The Bible teaches that it does not matter what day a person decides to worship, as long as he is convinced in his own mind and not judged by others (Romans 14:5, Colossians 2:16-17, Galatians 4:9-11). Sabbath keeping isn't the "seal of God" or the greatest commandment. The Holy Spirit is God's seal (Ephesians 1:13-14), and the greatest commandment Christians are supposed to adhere to is love (Matthew 7:12, 22:37-40, Romans 13:8-10). The Law's purpose was to point out a person's sin. Once a person is saved, they are dead to the Law. A Christian fulfills the Law by love (2 John 5,6) and obeys the teachings of the New Testament.

Once saved, a person will never enter judgment for salvation (John 5:24) and can no longer be under condemnation (Romans 8:1). When sins are confessed and forgiven, God no longer holds them against us (Jeremiah 31:34). Jesus knows His people (2 Timothy 2:19) and that we are only dust (Psalms 103:14). A sinner is reconciled through Jesus' death on the cross and is forgiven of all sins through His blood (Colossians 2:13). The Adventists' proof texts for investigative judgment (Daniel 8:14, 7:9; Revelation 14:7) have

nothing to do with a present judgment. Jesus taught that the judgment for works would be after His second coming (Matthew 25:31-46, I Peter 4:5, Hebrews 9:27), and He does the judging, not the Father (John 5:27). The investigational judgment cannot be validated by scripture and was only to cover up the embarrassment of 1844. If a person cannot be saved by works, how can works be required to maintain salvation (Romans 3:28, Galatians 2:16, 3:10-14)? Christ fulfilled the entire Mosaic Law, met all moral requirements, and fulfilled all ceremonial ordinances (Romans 5:10, Colossians 2:16-17). The Law's purpose was to show us our sins and point us to Christ. A saved person, led by the Spirit, is not under the Law (Galatians 5:18) but under love, which fulfills the Law (Romans 13:10).

Bible scholars define "sleep" as a metaphor for death. Each time "sleep" is mentioned, it refers to the body and never refers to the soul. Ecclesiastes 9:5 teaches that the dead don't know anything "under the sun," (what is happening on earth) not that a person is unconscious. The Greek word for death ("thanatos") means separation, not unconsciousness or nonexistence. Several passages use the term "death", although the person was still living (Colossians 2:13, I Timothy 5:6, Ephesians 2:1,5, Romans 7:4-13). The soul has an immediate destination after death determined by conversion. Paul said that he would be better off by departing and being instantly with Christ (Philippians 1:21-23). First Thessalonians 4:13-18 teaches that the bodies of the dead saints would rise and unite with their souls returning with Jesus. Because Jesus' statement made to the thief on the cross violates the doctrine of "soul sleeping," Adventists teach that Jesus said, "I say to you {today}, you will be with me in paradise." When Jesus used the phrase "verily, I say unto you", He never qualified the statement because it was unnecessary and redundant. He said, "Today you will be with me in paradise." Believers have a promise that after they die, they will immediately be with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8). Had Jesus taught "soul sleeping," He would never have told of the rich man and Lazarus. Jesus promised Martha that a believer continues to live without being interrupted by death (John 11:25-26). The unsaved will be punished in "Gehenna" (Greek word meaning "hell"). In Matthew 10:28 Jesus combined "Gehenna" with "Apolesai." According to Greek lexicons, the terms mean "to be delivered up to eternal misery." "Gehenna" symbolizes eternal separation and conscious punishment. The worm will not die, and the fire won't be quenched (Isaiah 66:24). Second Thessalonians 1:8-9 uses the phrase "everlasting destruction" indicating flaming fire on unbelievers. The Adventist assertion that destruction is annihilation distorts the original Greek. "Olethros," the Greek word for "destruction", clearly means "ruining." Lost people will no longer be able to glorify God; however, their souls, made in the image of God, are eternal and

remain intact. Revelation 20:10 uses the word, “basanizo,” which means conscious torment and not annihilation. God is a just judge and will not have mercy upon lost people who are guilty of eternal punishment by annihilating them (Mark 3:29).

Jesus’ sacrifice was once and for all (Hebrews 10:10, Hebrews 9:12). Having experienced the new birth, a believer has confidence in knowing he has eternal life (1 John 5:13). Adventists teach that Jesus’ blood doesn’t cancel all sin, although the Bible says it does (Ephesians 1:7, I John 1:7). Christians should strive for perfection, but scripture teaches that everyone sins (Romans 3:23) and that grace makes us righteous, not the Law (Galatians 3:24). Also discuss Galatians 3-4, Colossians 2, Hebrews 8, and Romans 7, which Adventists try to avoid.

# METHODISTS

In 1729, John and Charles Wesley started a Bible study at Oxford. Studying a holy life, the group was called “Methodist” because it was a methodical Bible study. The Wesleys preached the Gospel in America for two years and then went back to England. While in England, they learned of salvation by grace, justification by faith, depravity, and holiness. John Wesley started societies within the Church of England, but didn’t intend to start a new church. The American Revolution separated American Methodists from the Church of England. Americans wanted Wesley to ordain an American bishop, but he didn’t have church authority. He later gave them permission to start a new church following the New Testament instead of the Episcopalian pattern. Anyone wanting to save his soul was granted membership and could take communion. As a result, the term “Methodist” began to refer to a distinct denomination with different theological beliefs. Reading the Bible to encounter God’s Word, they stress unity and let theories sort themselves out. Methodists focus on holiness, salvation in several stages, and different graces. Prevenient grace leads to conversion and, though the sinner is spiritually dead, God’s grace leads him to repentance. Methodists allow lost people to join the church because of prevenient grace. Baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection, while sprinkling or pouring symbolizes anointing. Methodists believe Jesus freed man from Adam’s fall, making our sin a result of personal transgression and not the result of Adam’s nature within us. They also believe man can have saving faith without divine intervention. Believing in Christ, a man is justified, but his heart is regenerated later. Justifying grace cancels guilt and empowers a believer to resist sin and constitutes conversion. They believe conversion can happen at one time or across a period of time. Sanctifying grace sustains the believer in a spirit filled life. Only a man who has experienced total sanctification can be sure he will reach Heaven. Wesley taught four fundamentals of theology: man accepts or rejects salvation by human will (“free salvation”); all people obedient to the Gospel knowledge will be saved (“universal salvation”); the Holy Spirit assures man of salvation through inner experience (“sure salvation”); and the way of salvation starts with God’s love instead of sin.

## BE A WITNESS

New Testament churches required salvation and baptism before church membership (Acts 2:47). They were autonomous and accepted, rejected, and disciplined their own members. The Greek word for “baptize” (“baptizo”) requires immersion as an outward symbol of regeneration. Baptizing infants

and pouring or sprinkling adults has no scriptural support. Ask the Methodist, “Do you have what John Wesley had?” Wesley was a false convert until May 24, 1738. In His journal he wrote, “In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while the leader was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the Law of sin and death.” While he wrote that a man could hypothetically lose his salvation, he never doubted this conversion experience or lost his peace.

Jesus used several parables to teach the difference between true and false converts (e.g., parable of the wheat and the tares). False converts have never truly repented, experienced forgiveness, or been regenerated. Salvation by grace cannot be kept by works (Romans 11:6). A believer possesses eternal life, will not experience condemnation, and produces fruits of the Spirit (John 5:24). Saved people have an inheritance that will not fade away because they are kept by God's power (Peter 1:4-7). While saved people do sin, they are never utterly cast down but are preserved forever (Psalms 37:23,28). Every saved person reaches a state where he won't ultimately fall because he has confidence that Jesus, who started the good work in him, will perform it until the end (Philippians 1:6).

Although angels can fall, this has nothing to do with humans. Trusting in self-righteousness instead of Christ will result in death (Ezekiel 3:20). A believer may fall from works but never from God's grace. Judas didn't lose his salvation when he betrayed Christ; he never had it. He seemed spiritual, burdened for the poor, and trustworthy but was actually a devil (John 6:70) and Christ never kept him (John 17:12). When Peter trusted in his own faith, he sinned by denying the Lord but never lost his salvation. People may leave the faith without ever being in it (1 John 2:19). Paul worried about proving himself trustworthy (1 Corinthians 9:27) but intimately knew that Jesus would keep him until the end (2 Timothy 1:12). He told the Corinthian church to test their faith and make sure Jesus was in them (2 Corinthians 13:5-6). Wesley taught that a man could fall away from his relationship with God, repent, and be restored. However, Hebrews 6:4-6 reads, “It is impossible for a believer who has tasted the heavenly gift... tasted the goodness of God's word... **IF** they fall away to be brought back again to repentance because it would crucify Jesus again and make Him a public disgrace” (emphasis added). Addressing racial segregation and not personal salvation, Paul told the in-grafted branches, the Gentiles, to remain in kindness or be cut off (Romans 11:22). The Philippians were encouraged to grow spiritually as



they worked out their salvation (Philippians 2:12). Anyone trusting in self instead of Christ will fall into sin but will never lose salvation (1 Corinthians 10:11-12). The saved will reign with Christ when they endure, but even if they are faithless Christ will remain faithful and not disown Himself (2 Timothy 2:12-13).

By remaining in disobedience against Christ's commands, false converts demonstrate that the truth was never in them (1 John 2:4). A believer, though he sins, never thirsts (John 4:13-14) and can't be plucked out (John 10:28-30) or cast out (John 6:37) because God Himself preserves him (2 Timothy 4:18, John 17:11). Not even sinful flesh can keep believers from the love of Christ (Romans 8:35). Security doesn't depend on self but on God's ability to keep promises (Hebrews 6:17-20). Once a sinner repents and has been forgiven, the Lord knows him intimately (2 Timothy 2:19). People go to Hell not because of unrighteous living but for rejecting the Gospel (John 3:18). Justification, "being made right", requires God taking our sin and putting it on Christ (Romans 3:23-25) and infusing Christ's righteousness into the believer. Believers are preserved blameless (1 Thessalonians 5:23) because the Lord is faithful and keeps them from evil (2 Thessalonians 3:3). Salvation can't be wholly of grace if a person can lose it by works. A person can forfeit a sense of assurance by quenching the spirit, living in disobedience, and refusing to grow in the Spirit, but the Spirit's seal guarantees a believer's inheritance until the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:13). These people will not get much of a reward in Heaven, but they will be saved from the fire (1 Corinthians 3:15). The Spirit lives within believers and testifies with their spirit that they are saved (Romans 8:16). God's love isn't conditional. He proved His love even while we were sinners by sending His Son for the ungodly (Romans 5:8). Security is based on His love. Because He loved us even as rebellious sinners before we were saved, He loves us enough to keep us even when we sin. After we have repented and been forgiven our salvation isn't conditional.



# SOUTHERN BAPTIST

Southern Baptists affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). The SBC was chartered in Augusta, Georgia in 1845 with the “goal of combining, eliciting, and directing the energies of the Baptist Denomination.” One of the largest Christian organizations in the world, there are over 16 million members and 42,000 churches in the United States. Individual churches are autonomous and may not endorse the convention’s official teachings. “Accept Christ,” a catch-phrase popularized by D.L. Moody, perpetuated by modern evangelists, and taught in many SBC churches, has caused a major separation between “Old Time Baptists” and the SBC. The term didn’t exist among Baptist before the late 1800’s when mass evangelism started influencing preachers. J.M Carroll may have been the first to use the phrase “accept Christ” in an eternal security booklet. This new terminology started a dangerous practice. The Roman Road is another evangelistic error. Sinners hear a progression of scriptures ending with a prefabricated prayer. This results in a works-based salvation, leaving the sinner lost and confused. The Roman Road uses a seemingly logical approach. The verses break down sin, show its consequence, and provide a logical escape. The Road begins with “*all have sinned*” (Romans 3:23), “*the wages of sin is death*” (Romans 6:23a), “*but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ*” (Romans 6:23b). The fact is reiterated with “*God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us!*” (Romans 5:8). So far, the Roman Road has presented the truth but the presenter is about to make a heinous logical fallacy. When using logic, all conditional facts must be true. These scriptures are true but taking the verses out of context or using wrong verb tenses makes the argument false. The Roman Road continues with Romans 10:13, “*Whoever will call upon the Lord will be Saved*”, followed by Romans 10:9-10, “*If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.*” The Road ends with Revelation 3:20a, “*Behold I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him.*” Another version of the Roman Road (ABC’s) tells a sinner to A. Admit your sin. B. Believe in Jesus’ sacrifice for sins, C. Confess your promise.

## BE A WITNESS

Accepting Christ, The Roman Road, and The ABC’s are methods of decisional regeneration that leave out repentance and the Holy Spirit’s work.

Decisional regeneration attributes the new birth to both God and man. However, regeneration changes a sinner's heart, which only God can do. The new birth changes a person inside and is not an act a person performs. The children of God are "born not of the will of the flesh or the will of man but of God" (John 1:13). A sinner cannot regenerate or accept salvation but can only be "born from above" through repentance and faith (John 3:5). Because man is spiritually dead (Ephesians 2:1, Romans 8:8), no one can come to Jesus except the Father draws him (John 6:44, 65). A man may make himself appear Christian, but he remains lost until the Holy Spirit comes into his soul and gives him a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26-67). Jesus gives eternal life when a sinner meets His conditions of repentance and faith (John 5:21).

The Roman Road presents the verbs "shall be" as present tense but they were written in future tense (Romans 10:12-13). God saves all that call upon Him after He answers by purifying a heart through the Holy Spirit. The seeker must seek until the Lord removes conviction (Acts 17:27). Christ becomes a personal Savior by accepting a sinner's faith and repentance. Salvation, spiritual deliverance from sin through Christ's blood, results in being born of the Spirit and unites a believer with the imputed righteousness of Christ (John 3:8). When a people become justified by faith they experience peace with God and His love is shed abroad in their heart (Romans 5:1-5). Paul calls the experience "circumcision of the heart by the Spirit and not by the letter" (Romans 2:28-29). God has complete control in transforming a soul and chooses who He will save (Romans 9:17-18). Trusting in a verse, confessing, or making a decision without the Holy Spirit regenerating the heart and bearing witness gives sinners a false sense of security until the Lord declares that He never knew them (Matthew 7:22-23). Jesus said salvation was only possible through God (Matthew 19:26) therefore works of righteousness such as making a decision or accepting cannot save. The soul must be regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). Regeneration comes through repentance and faith and the Spirit must bear witness (Romans 8:16, I John 5:10). Knowing God experimentally by being born again is the "rock" upon which Jesus promised He would build his church (Matthew 16:16-18).

A sinner's prayer must come directly from his heart not a script or another person's coaching. The Holy Spirit alone informs people of their salvation. God saves through the foolishness of preaching. All other methods are devised by man and fall short of converting a sinner (I Corinthians 1:23-24).

# WHY NOT WIN?

While the church engages in many activities, evangelism should always be the top priority. The Great Commission was not given solely to the early church. Why aren't more churches engaging in evangelism? Because Satan doesn't want believers witnessing, he offers excuses. However, nothing will excuse a believer from the blood on his hands if he fails to share the Gospel.

## **“Is it God’s will to witness?”**

Winning souls is always in God’s will. A saved person has the mind of Christ and of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:16, Ephesians 4:23). God isn't willing that any should perish but that all would come to Him through repentance (2 Peter 3:9). He finds no pleasure in people dying but commands that they repent and live (Ezekiel 18:32). Because God loved the world, He sent His Son to seek and save it (John 3:16). Believers possess a new heart that produces genuine love for others demonstrated through actions. Proclaiming the Gospel and being burdened for lost souls proves love for them. Jesus said that those who love Him will keep His commandments (John 14:15). Disobeying His commands demonstrates a lack of love and misplaced priorities. As a result, He will distance Himself from the believer. A believer simply cannot please God without being a soul winner.

## **“Now isn’t a good time...”**

Witnessing cannot wait for a more convenient time; saved people must make the most out of every opportunity to present the Gospel (Ephesians 5:15). Jesus declared the fields ripe for harvest, and Paul said that today is the day of salvation (John 4:35, 2 Corinthians 6:1-2). We must stop procrastinating in sharing the Gospel because there may not be another opportunity.

## **“I’m not a preacher.”**

Pastors and Evangelists should equip saints to evangelize (Ephesians 4:11-13). Effective “evangelists” are committed and obedient believers. Every saved person is to become a “minister of reconciliation” and an ambassador for Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).

## **“The Holy Spirit isn’t leading me to talk to them.”**

When Jesus ascended, He said to go and tell everyone (Mark 16:15). Witnesses do not need to wait for the Holy Spirit to lead them to do what Jesus has already commanded. The Spirit will fill every believer for witnessing and help him present the Gospel (Acts: 1:8). Our job is to be a willing vessel.

### **“I’m inadequate.”**

Feelings of inadequacy can be overcome through discipline, Bible study, relying on the Spirit, and realizing that God works within the believer to accomplish His purpose (Philippians 2:13). Shyness can be overcome through prayer. Paul requested prayer that he would present the Gospel boldly as he was obligated to do (Ephesians 6:20). The realization of God’s love toward us creates a love for Him and a love for others that conquers all fear and creates a zeal to see the lost won (1 John 4:18).

God’s Word must burn within the witness’s heart. Although Jeremiah preached to wicked people who wouldn’t listen, he prayed and felt God’s Word stirring inside of him (Jeremiah 20:7-9). When the Word of God stirs his heart, a witness cannot help but to go and proclaim the Gospel with boldness (Acts 4:29-31). Believers will not be able to put out the Holy Spirit’s fire or prevent the love of Christ from compelling them to witness (1 Thessalonians 5:19, 2 Corinthians 5:14). The world is starving for the Word of the Lord (Amos 8:11). Witnesses must feast on the Word and present it to others (Ezekiel 3:1-2). The more we know scripture, the more the Holy Spirit can aid us in witnessing. The Word is the Sword of the Spirit. Witnesses need more training in evangelism, which comes through studying the Bible.

### **“It won’t do any good.”**

Sinners naturally will not want to hear what a witness has to say. God’s Word cuts through their heart, brings them under conviction, and even breaks rocks into pieces (Jeremiah 23:29, Hebrews 4:12). The Gospel, while a stumbling block to the Jew and foolishness to the Gentile, becomes the power of God unto salvation when the Holy Spirit provides illumination (1 Corinthians 1:23, Romans 1:16). Proclaiming God’s Word will never be in vain because it never returns to Him void (Isaiah 55:11). Lack of “results” should not discourage us (Galatians 6:9). God judges the results (1 Corinthians 4:5).

### **“What if something goes wrong?”**

Things will go wrong. We will forget verses, misquote words, or clam up. Failure makes a witness stronger. Filling a pew may be comfortable, but the Spiritual warfare can only be won by going out, proclaiming, and winning the lost to advance God’s kingdom (Ephesians 6:10-18).

### **“I’m praying for them. Isn’t that good enough?”**

Staying and praying will always be easier, but sinners will not hear unless someone proclaims the truth (Romans 10:14).

**“I’ll just become friends with them and be a good example.”**

Evangelism requires proclaiming the truth adequately and in the Spirit. People don’t get saved because a witness lives a good life or loves them, but salvation is a result of hearing the Gospel, repenting, and believing.

When a believer considers all God has done for him, he will have Paul’s mindset, “Woe unto me if I do not preach the Gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:16). Like the apostles, they will not be able to help speaking about what they have seen and heard (Acts 4:20). Jesus said, “Take up your cross and follow Me” (Matthew 16:24). Considering these verses, we should remove all excuses that prevent us from witnessing.

Winning souls through personal evangelism can bring about another great revival. Jesus said, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field” (Luke 10:2). God’s people must be revived before an evangelistic revival comes. When we recognize God’s holiness, our unworthiness, and our responsibility to spread the Word, we will be like Isaiah and say, “Here am I, Lord send me” (Isaiah 6:1-8). Knowing the terror of the Lord we will persuade men (2 Corinthians 5:11). Though believers are in the world, we are not of the world and are commanded to shine as a light (Philippians 2:15). The church shines her light through members and their personal evangelism (Matthew 5:14-16). Compassion and concern should motivate us to befriend the lost and warn them of the coming wrath (2 Peter 3:10).

# RESOURCES

## Books:

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*The Way of the Master. Tyndale, 2004.*

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Martin, Walter. *Kingdom of the Cults.* Bethany House, 2002.

McDowell, Josh. *Evidence That Demands a Verdict.* Thomas Nelson, 1999.

Rhodes, Ron. *Reasoning From the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witness.*  
Harvest House Publishers, 1993.

*Reasoning From the Scriptures With Catholics.* Harvest House Publishers, 2000.

*Reasoning From the Scriptures with Mormons.* Harvest House Publishers, 1995.

Spurgeon, Charles H. *All of Grace.* Moody Publishers, 1984.

## Websites:

Answers in Genesis "<http://www.answersingenesis.org>"

Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry: "<http://www.carm.org>"

Christian Research Institute: "<http://www.equip.org>"

Effective Evangelism: "<http://www.effectiveevangelism.com>"

ExAdventist: "<http://www.exadventist.com>"

Islam Review: "<http://www.islamreview.com>"

Mormonism Research Ministry: "<http://www.mrm.org>"

Pastor Tim: "<http://www.pastortim.org>"

I applaud Brother Binion for his efforts in writing this book, "Win: Bringing Lost Souls to Christ". I read the manuscript with much interest and appreciate his desire to inspire and encourage all of us in the scriptural ways and means of promoting the gospel. Born again believers are called out to be witnesses on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrines which he taught, especially the plan of salvation.

Jesus warned, "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matthew 24:4). Then He said, "And many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:11). According to the American Heritage Dictionary, the word "deceive" means: "To cause a person to believe what is not true; mislead." How tragic, but true, are the words of the Apostle Paul, who warned, "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13). Many religious people and organizations are extremely zealous in proselytizing. However, just getting people to make a profession of faith and join a church will not benefit them if they have not experienced true conviction and salvation. Jesus said concerning the Pharisees, "For ye compass land and sea to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves: (Matthew 23:15). Jesus also referred to Pharisees as "blind leaders of the blind" and said, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matthew 15:15).

In this book, Brother Binion faithfully presents the Biblical plan of salvation. It is by grace through repentance and faith! He also emphasizes our responsibility to testify of our own salvation, and to witness to the lost that God loves them, and Jesus died on the cross to save them. He cautions against the use of leading anyone into a profession either by acknowledging their belief of choice verses or by repeating a prayer, after which the victim is told, "You are saved." Only the Holy Spirit can lead a person to God through Christ. Another valuable feature of this book is the way Brother Binion sets forth many of the heresies that are being taught by various religions, along with the scriptures that may be used humbly, yet effectively, to counter the deceptive nature of these false doctrines.

May the Lord bless this effort and stir our hearts. May we desire the sincere milk of the Word, and become scripturally equipped as unashamed witnesses of the manifold grace of God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- Elder Billy L. Moran